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ABSTRACT OF THREE PAPERS READ AT THE ORIENTAL CONGRESS.*

ON THE NABATAEAN INSCRIPTIONS IN THE SINAITIC PENINSULA.

Whereas the number of Nabataean inscriptions copied by previous travelers scarcely comes up to 300, Prof. Euting succeeded last spring in adding 700 to the collection. He achieved this success simply because he traveled as an Arab, and climbed barefooted along the rocks in places overlooked by other collectors. Also of many inscriptions previously known he brought home better copies and squeezes yielding the novel and important result that some of the inscriptions were found to be dated. Thus, one showing the year 126, "being the year of the three emperors," agrees according to the era of Bosra, which commences in the year 111 A. D., with 237 of our era. The other bears the date 85 (= A. D. 196). As compared with Glaser's S. Arabian inscriptions, these Nabataean inscriptions are not important on account of their age any more than by their contents, for they mostly convey only greetings and names. But they furnish valuable material for tracing the history of the origin of Arabic writing. The writers of those stone records were, in his opinion, neither shepherds nor pilgrims, but merchants who, while returning from a caravan journey (perhaps from S. Arabia to Petra), found a temporary resting for their camels in these valleys so rich in pasturage. These merchants, well acquainted with writing, would while away their time by inscribing their names upon the rocks, with greetings to those who might follow in their wake.

PROF. J. EUTING.

SO-CALLED KAPPADOKIAN CUNEIFORM TABLETS.

In 1881 Mr. Pinches drew attention to two Cuneiform tablets, said to come from Kappadokia, one of which was in the British Museum, the other in the Louvre. They were written in a peculiar form of Cuneiform script, and did not seem to be in the Assyrian language; Mr. Pinches concluded therefore that they represented the ancient language of Kappadokia. The following year Prof. Ramsay was starting on a tour of exploration in eastern Asia Minor, and I asked him to inquire for Cuneiform tablets. His inquiries proved fruitless, however; but just before he left Kaisariyeh he noticed some tablets in a shop which he bought for a small sum of money. On his return to England, he handed them over to me. I found that they were similar to the two tablets published by Mr.

* From *Trübner's Record*. No. 247.